

Redemptive History: The Covenantal Framework of the New Testament

I. Introduction and Review

“Because of its unique role in gathering together the various strands of covenantal promise throughout history, this last of God’s covenants appropriately may be designated as the covenant of consummation.” (Robertson, 272)

II. Covenant theology in Luke’s Gospel

a. The portrait of Jesus in the Gospel of Luke

- i. First temptation (Luke 4:1–13)
- ii. Family tree (Luke 3:1–38)
- iii. Final tree (Luke 23:26–49)

b. Bringing it together: the covenant of works

- i. Active obedience of Christ: he perfectly met God’s righteous demands
- ii. Passive obedience of Christ: he perfectly bore our guilt and curse for sin

c. Implications for teaching the Gospels

d. Adam-Christology in the other Gospels

III. Covenant theology in Acts

a. The apostolic interpretation of Scripture in Acts

- i. The death and burial of David (Acts 2)
- ii. The holy and sure blessings of David (Acts 13)
- iii. The rebuilt tent of David (Acts 15)

b. Bringing it together: the Davidic covenant (and others!)

- i. The resurrection shows that Jesus is God’s Messiah, the reigning king, and the Yes to all of God’s promises

- ii. The Davidic covenant does not stand alone, but carries forward the promises of earlier covenants
 - c. Implications for teaching Acts
- IV. Covenant theology in Paul (Galatians 3)
 - a. The Mosaic covenant complements (not contradicts) the Abrahamic covenant
 - i. The Galatians were justified by God and received the Spirit by grace through faith (3:1–6).
 - ii. Scripture itself teaches that salvation is by grace through faith; relying on works is hopeless (3:7–14).
 - iii. The Mosaic covenant does not *cancel* but *continues* the promises made to Abraham (3:15–18).
 - iv. The Mosaic covenant built on Abrahamic covenant in two specific ways.
 - 1. It clarifies the depth of human sin (3:19–22).
 - 2. It prepares for and prefigures Jesus Christ (3:23–29).
 - b. Bringing it together: the Abrahamic and Mosaic covenants
 - c. Implications for teaching Paul’s letters
- V. The benefits of the new covenant

Further reading:

Beginning: Jonty Rhodes, *Covenants Made Simple*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 2013.

Intermediate: O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*. Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1980.

Advanced: Guy P. Waters, J. Nicholas Reid, and John Muether, eds., *Covenant Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020.

Brandon D. Crowe, *The Last Adam*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017.